



# ALASKA WIC VENDOR TRAINING NEWSLETTER

State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services  
Division of Public Assistance

Family Nutrition Services / WIC Program

Internet: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dpa/nutri/WIC>

Volume 8, Issue 1  
February 2008

INSIDE **THIS** ISSUE:

- ◆ Review of Cashier Procedures
- ◆ Infant Formula Update
- ◆ Price Sheets are Due March 31, 2008
- ◆ Vendor Q & A - What are "authorized" WIC foods?

**Please post this  
where it will be seen and  
read by employees.  
This newsletter serves as  
required vendor  
training.**



## Cashier procedures to help prevent "rejected" warrants

- ✓ Check participant's ID
- ✓ Check valid dates printed on the warrant; do not accept a warrant before the first date or after the last date printed on the warrant
  - *the bank will reject warrants taken outside the valid dates*
- ✓ Compare the amounts and types of foods selected by the participant with the items printed on the warrant
- ✓ Process each warrant separately
  - *combining more than one warrant or charging for foods not listed on a warrant, could cause the total amount to be higher than the "not to exceed" price for that warrant type*
- ✓ Write the total amount of sale for the items purchased on the warrant clearly and legibly
  - *the bank will reject warrants when the actual purchase price is missing or altered*
- ✓ Have participant sign and date the warrant; compare the signature with the participant's ID; make sure the date is correct and legible
  - *the bank will reject warrants without signature of participant, guardian or alternate*
  - *the bank will reject warrants with missing or altered dates that cannot be verified*
- ✓ Stamp your vendor number clearly on the warrant in the box below the amount of sale before deposit
  - *the bank will reject warrants with missing, illegible, or invalid vendor stamp ID numbers*



## Procedure for Correcting WIC Warrants

Failure to follow the procedures outlined below may cause a warrant to be rejected by the bank.

- ✓ If the wrong "total amount of sale" is written on a WIC warrant follow the steps below to correct it:
  - 1) Draw a single line through the incorrect amount on the warrant - the original amount should still be readable.
  - 2) Clearly write the correct amount next to it in ink.
  - 3) The cashier, store manager or designated store employee must initial the change. (initials should be as close as possible to the correction)
- ✓ If a participant has written in the wrong, altered or eligible date on a WIC warrant, follow the steps below to correct it:
  - 1) Draw a single line through the date on the warrant
  - 2) If there is room in the "Date" box, clearly write the correct date next to the original date; if there is not enough space in the "Date" box, then write the correct date in the space to the left of the words "STATE OF ALASKA."
  - 3) The cashier, store manager or designated store employee must initial the change. (initials should be as close as possible to the correction)

**Please NOTE: Any writing (amount, signature, transaction date) should be in black or dark blue ink. Other ink colors may not show up well and could cause warrants to be returned unpaid. All vendor stamps should be in BLACK ink ONLY.**

## Infant Formula Update

Alaska WIC Program's formula rebate contract changed to Ross Products, maker of Similac, on October 1, 2007.

All vendors who are not exempt from stocking infant formula must have the required minimum stock of the following currently approved infant formulas:

20 cans - Similac Advance w/iron, pwd, 12.9 oz.

31 cans - Similac Advance w/iron, conc, 13 fl oz.

10 cans - Similac Isomil Advance, pwd, 12.9 oz.

10 cans - Similac Isomil Advance conc, 13 fl oz.

16 cans - Similac Sensitive conc, 13 fl oz.

ONLY the type and quantity of formula printed on the WIC check may be purchased.

**NO SUBSTITUTIONS ALLOWED!**



**Price Sheets  
Due March 31**

### Why are Price Sheets Necessary ?

- ◆ To let WIC know which items are most popular
- ◆ If not stocked by many stores, item may be dropped from Food List
- ◆ Check for overcharging
- ◆ Monitor price changes & project food costs
- ◆ If costs rise too much, WIC might have to change the approved foods or put clients on waiting lists

### What are "authorized" WIC foods?

The State WIC agency selects specific types, brands and/or sizes of food items authorized for the WIC program in Alaska. The foods must meet federal nutrition criteria, (such as vitamin or mineral content or low sugar or fat content). Other factors considered are price and availability at WIC vendors throughout Alaska. The program aims to provide participants with choices, but to ensure food costs are reasonable and competitive in order to serve as many participants as possible.

The types and quantities of foods approved for purchase by WIC participants are listed on their WIC warrants. The specific brands and types of foods they may buy are described on the Alaska WIC Food List. Any non-food item or any food that is NOT printed on the warrant or on the Food List is "unauthorized."

It is a serious violation of WIC rules for a vendor to sell "unauthorized" items to WIC participants, whether it is intentional or not. Each occurrence can result in 50 penalty points. If the State agency determines a vendor has a pattern of providing unauthorized food items in exchange for WIC warrants, federal regulations require a mandatory one-year disqualification from the Program.

During "undercover" compliance buys in Alaska, cashiers have occasionally allowed the following "unauthorized" items to be purchased: 1) Cereal brands or varieties not on the WIC Food List or combinations that exceed 36 ounces; 2) Infant formula types, brands, sizes or quantities different than what is printed on warrant; 3) Juice in 64 oz cartons or plastic bottles; and 4) Sliced Swiss and Cheddar cheese. *Can you explain why these purchases should not have been allowed?*

## Q & A

### What can store employees do if a WIC customer attempts to buy unauthorized food items?



- Explain that the WIC Program allows only the foods printed on the warrant (and authorized by the Food List) to be purchased. (Refer to the WIC Food List)
- Explain that your store could be penalized for selling unauthorized foods or non-food items.
- Offer to help the customer choose the correct foods.
- If a WIC customer becomes abusive or threatening, report it to your manager and complete a WIC Program Complaint Report so WIC staff can follow-up with the participant.

One responsibility of being a WIC vendor is to make sure only "WIC approved foods" are purchased by participants. Every cashier should have a copy of the Food List and refer to it when questions come up. If the Food List does not provide the answer, the local or State WIC agency may be contacted for assistance.

### Vendor Staff Contact Information

**Vendor Coordinator**, Diane VanEpps (907) 465-4704  
diane.vanepps@alaska.gov

**Ass't Vendor Coordinator**, Vacant

**Admin Clerk**, Carmen Cortese (907) 465-3388  
carmen.cortese@alaska.gov

**This institution is an equal opportunity provider.**